(a) for how long 2 or 3 districts of West Bengal were under the control of Maoists before the security forces could regain and restore Lalgarh in the recent past;

(b) whether cognizance has not been taken by the authorities concerned and attempt to flush out then and there instead of waiting to develop into a grave and major problem;

(c) whether it is not a serious lapse;

(d) whether in the encounter or in the process of flush out between Maoists and security forces, it is a fact that Maoists and Naxalates used the local tribal people as their shield; and

(e) if so, how many tribal people were killed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI AJAY MAKEN): (a) to (e) On the basis of violence profile, West Midnapore district of West Bengal is included in the list of districts under Security Related Expenditure scheme, for which expenditure on account of anti-naxal operations is reimbursed to the State.

After IED blast in November 2008, local people constituted a Committee called *'Police Santrash Birodhi Janaganer Committee'* (PSBJC), to oppose police action. CPI (Maoist) extended support to the Committee.

State Police Forces; have been coordinating operations in the naxal affected areas, with assistance of Central Para Military Forces, in a focused manner in the area since 18th June 2009. No casualties of tribals have been reported due to the above operation.

**Smuggling and consumption of drugs in the country**

1234. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of recent reports indicating that in addition to being a major transit centre for drug smuggling, consumption of drugs is increasing in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, city-wise and State-wise; and

(c) the steps Government has taken/proposes to take to combat and curb drug consumption and smuggling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir. Government do not have any authentic report to indicate that consumption of drugs is increasing in the country.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The steps taken by Government to combat and curb drug consumption and smuggling are given in the Statement.

***Statement***

*Details of steps taken by Government to combat and curb drug consumption and smuggling*

i) Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment under its scheme of Prevention of Alcoholism and Substance (Drug) Abuse is providing financial assistance to Non-Governmental Organizations for running De-addiction centres.

ii) A National Drug Awareness Campaign is launched every year on the occasion of 'International Day against illicit trafficking and Drug Abuse' on 26th June. Under this campaign, ill effects of the drugs are discussed with people so that correct information and life skills are available to young people to help them to choose a drug free and healthy life style.

iii) Information, Education and communication (IEC) materials like posters, banners, panels, brochures, audio and visual spots have been developed to impart knowledge about drugs through radio, television, newspapers and other mass media. Special camps are organized from time to time in which the messages against drugs are spread through discussions, rallies, puppet shows, street plays and pantomime shows.

iv) Strict surveillance and enforcement at import and export points.

v) Intensive preventive and interdiction efforts along known drug routes.

vi) Improved coordination between the various drug law enforcement agencies for greater cohesion in interdiction measures.

vii) Strengthening of international liaison for dissemination of operational intelligence. Government has signed bilateral agreements/MoUs, MLATs/Extradition treaties with many countries to provide mutual cooperation and assistance in all drug related matters. Increased international cooperation has led to number of joint operations including Controlled Delivery operations.

viii) Special efforts are being made-to deal drug trafficking by Internet Pharmacy, Methamphetamine Labs, courier parcels etc.

ix) Conducting training programmes for law enforcement officials for upgrading their skills to combat drug trafficking.

x) Implementing a scheme of monetary rewards for information leading to seizures of Narcotics drugs to informants and officers.

xi) Financial assistance being provided to eligible States for strengthening their narcotics units. Apex level coordination committees in the States have been constituted to review the drug situation including illicit cultivation and preventive action taken by the State.

**Police under staffed to tackle terror and crime**

1235. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state: